

# Concord

NORTH CAROLINA

## ***CITY CIRCULAR***

SUMMER 2010



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- Incentives/Industrial Grants
- Hot Weather Precautions
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**David W. Phillips**  
District 1  
Mayor Pro-Tem



**James E. Ramseur**  
District 2



**Ella Mae Small**  
District 3



**Alfred M. Brown, Jr.**  
District 4



**W. Lamar Barrier**  
District 5



**Hector H. Henry II**  
District 6



**John A. Sweat, Jr.**  
District 7

The Concord City Circular is produced quarterly by the City Public Information Office to provide Concord citizens with information about current activities of the City of Concord. It contains items that will help make it easier for you to do business with the City. Your comments and questions are welcomed. Please send them to Concord City Circular, P.O. Box 308, Concord, NC 28026 or call 704-920-5204 or e-mail [franzese@ci.concord.nc.us](mailto:franzese@ci.concord.nc.us).

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## City of Concord Finance Department Receives Award

The City of Concord's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009 qualifies for a Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. The Finance Department has received this award for 21 consecutive years.

Also, Standard & Poor's upgraded the City's bond rating from AA- to AA with a stable outlook, and Fitch did the same by moving the City's general obligation rating to AA+. Good bond ratings mean the City is able to sell General Obligation bonds to finance capital projects, including new parks, libraries, pools and roads, at lower interest rates. The ratings



can also increase the value of existing General Obligation bonds for investors. These accomplishments speak highly of the City's judicious use and fiscally responsible care of all public funds. □

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## From the Mayor

*J. Scott Padgett*



# With Tourism Comes Traffic

In 1796, the factions in our community were debating the location of the newly-established county seat. A compromise was eventually reached, and the new city was founded in 1796 on a 26-acre site. The city was named Concord, meaning "harmony," to reflect the spirit in which the issue was settled.

When you look at Concord today and see the wonderful mixture of progress and heritage, the perfect blend of business, industrial and residential life, you can see that Concord still embodies the meaning of its name — "harmony."

As my wife and I were walking in the downtown area, it dawned on me that we were greeted time after time in a friendly manner by residents. As home of the No. 1 tourist attraction in the state, people from around the world are treated to our harmonious citizens. It is our hospitality and local charm that sets Concord apart from the rest of the state and nation.

Millions of people visit Concord for the racing industry, race shops, drag racing, NASCAR events and Concord Mills Mall. Concord Mills Mall, the No. 1 tourist attraction in North Carolina, brings more than 17

million visitors each year. Charlotte Motor Speedway brings 1.25 million fans, vendors and participants in May and October. ZMax Drag Strip brings thousands each year for several NHRA and other sanctioned races as well as the Dirt Track. The total economic impact of all races is around \$343 million.



Last year, more than 2,000 groups visited the Embassy Suites/Concord Convention Center and hundreds of thousands of people stayed in the 1,800 hotel rooms at Exit 49. In addition, 31,000 rounds of golf were played at the Rocky River Golf Club. In recent years, visitor spending has increased at an average rate of ten percent a year. More than \$200 million of revenue come into Cabarrus County each year, according to the N.C. Division

of Tourism, ranking 13th in the state. More than 18.5 million people choose to come to Concord each year, which is approximately twice the total population of North Carolina.

With all the benefits of tourism comes traffic. Tourism increases the traffic along I-85, and especially at

Exit 49 where traffic backs up dangerously on the ramps every weekend. It is imperative that the North Carolina Department of Transportation include improvements to Exit 49 and the surrounding area in the future transportation plan.

The Bruton Smith Boulevard and Weddington Road intersection averages 35,000 vehicles per day or 12.8 million vehicles per year. In ten years, with an average growth projection of 30 percent, the traffic volume of the intersection would equal 45,000 vehicles per day or 16.6 million vehicles per year.

As Concord continues to attract visitors to our city, we will experience greater transportation needs. We will continue to press upon elected officials at the state level the importance of Exit 49, not only to Concord, but to the entire state as an economic engine. ▢



*Brian Hiatt, Concord City Manager*



# Planning for Future Water Needs

In the current economic environment, it is essential for local governments to take aggressive steps to control costs. Certainly, the City of Concord has stepped up to that challenge; however, there are always critical needs that local governments cannot ignore, even when faced with revenue challenges. The year 2010 has already brought two significant events that move us forward in meeting current and future water needs in Cabarrus County. Solidifying future water sources has been a critical need for several years.

About 10 years ago, Concord and Kannapolis began to jointly pursue new water sources to address concerns about the safe yield of current water sources. A study commissioned by the Water and Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County (WSACC) demonstrated that existing water sources would not only fall short in meeting needs for the next 25 years, but that our reservoirs, and in particular Lake Howell, produce smaller save yields of potable water during periods of low rainfall than originally projected. Since the drainage areas for water supplies in Cabarrus County were not producing

adequate flows during low rainfall periods (and Cabarrus has no major river running through it), this led Concord and Kannapolis to pursue Interbasin Transfer (IBT) authority to obtain water from both the Catawba and Yadkin rivers.

Many of you know that after years of studies, documentation and public meetings, the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission (EMC) granted the IBT authority to the two cities in 2007 necessary to implement a plan to serve the county for the next 25-plus years. A maximum amount of 10 million gallons per day (gpd) of water was allocated from the Catawba and 10 million gpd from the Yadkin. Soon after the EMC ruling, two groups — the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation and the Protect the Catawba Coalition — filed an appeal of the decision, citing concerns about the Catawba River.

Earlier this year Concord and Kannapolis reached a settlement with these two groups. The settlement maintained the 10 million gpd allocation each from the Catawba and the Yadkin, but dictated the levels of withdrawal from the Catawba during periods of drought. Concord and

Kannapolis also agreed to memorialize many of the best practices already used to promote permanent water conservation, and to a water withdrawal schedule from the Catawba. This action put the legal disagreements to rest and provides a clear path to move forward in addressing water needs.

Under the settlement, our two cities also agreed to limit withdrawals from the Catawba to 3 million gpd until the use of the Yadkin IBT reaches 5 million gpd. Concord is already interconnected with the Charlotte/Mecklenburg system, which uses Catawba water, at three locations and has a contract with them for water use during emergency periods. Kannapolis is interconnected with Salisbury, which uses Yadkin water, but the current agreement and infrastructure has its limitations.

This led to the second significant event impacting water infrastructure needs this year. On May 5, the City Councils of Albemarle, Concord and Kannapolis met jointly to discuss a project to extend an Albemarle waterline (which uses Yadkin water) and a Concord waterline to connect at a point on NC 49 at the Cabarrus/Stany County line in order to bring

more water into the Concord and Kannapolis systems. Obviously, such a project starts with the engineering design. The local governments decided to move forward immediately to consider a joint engineering contract that will develop the plans for a project that is anticipated to cost around \$21 million, with that amount to be shared by the three jurisdictions.

Once completed, the water line will be sized to bring in the 10 million gpd allocated from the Yadkin under the IBT certificate. The jurisdictions are also negotiating a contract that will provide for at least the 5 million gpd identified in the settlement agreement. The project will involve almost 100,000 linear feet of waterline, related pump stations and a ground storage tank.

Citizens and businesses look to their cities to provide for basic infrastructure needs. There is no more of a basic need than safe and clean water for the health and safety of our residents and to support the jobs created by local businesses. While such infrastructure requires large monetary outlays, these are necessary investments in the future of our communities that we cannot afford to ignore. □



## News & Updates

### Call Before You Dig: It Keeps You and Your Neighbors Safe

Digging in the dirt is a pleasure for some and work for others. But did you know that North Carolina law requires you to notify your area utilities at least 48 hours (two working days) in advance of an excavation project? By simply dialing "811," you can talk toll-free to the North Carolina One Call Center, who will handle everything for you — except the digging part!

At no charge, North Carolina One Call will notify all your local utilities. The utility company will then locate and mark its company-owned underground facilities in the area of your dig. That way you or your contractor can be sure to avoid them when installing the new



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

swimming pool, sprinkler system or even trees and shrubs.

Remember, calling before you dig doesn't cost a thing, but not calling could result in property damage or serious injury. Call the North Carolina One Call Center, 811 or check their Web site at [www.ncocc.org](http://www.ncocc.org) for more information before you dig. □

### Concord 101: Classes Start in the Fall

Curious as to how the name "Harmony" came about? Ever wonder just how many water lines supply Concord? How many dump trucks the City has? Concord 101 is an educational experience for citizens of Concord.

The free class is open to citizens of

Concord at least 18 years of age, will meet every Tuesday from 6:00 to 8:30pm beginning in September and will end with a graduation ceremony in December. Students are allowed to miss two classes and still graduate the course. Students must also attend a City Council meeting.

The best thing about Concord 101 is that there are NO TESTS!! For more information on Concord 101 or to request an application, contact Kim Deason, City Clerk, at 704-920-5205 or email [deasonk@ci.concord.nc.us](mailto:deasonk@ci.concord.nc.us). Applications are due August 10, 2010. □

*Mitch Furr, Concord Police Department Code Enforcement*



## Demolition of Dilapidated Structures: Why the City of Concord Performs These Projects

The City of Concord Police Department Code Enforcement Division ensures that all houses and structures meet the minimum housing code. The housing code stipulates that every citizen within the city limits of Concord is entitled to decent, safe and sanitary housing conditions. Inspections are performed by a code enforcement officer whenever a complaint has been received about the condition and safety of a property, or the officer identifies a possible Minimum Housing Code Violation.

Once a property is identified as possibly being in violation of the City of Concord Minimum Housing Standards, the City obtains permission to inspect the property. This permission can be granted by the tenant, owner of the property or through an administrative search warrant.

An inspection of the property is performed by a code enforcement



*Before (above) and after*

officer. Violations are identified and documented.

If violations are documented, the enforcement officer will issue a violation notice along with a list of the items found to be in non-compliance. A hearing notice will be issued setting forth a date and time for the owner to discuss the

findings with the code enforcement officer to establish a timetable for the needed repairs or demolition, whichever is relevant.

If the structure is not brought into compliance by the date established in the Findings of Fact and Order, civil penalties may then be assessed as outlined in the Findings of Fact and Order.

If the property is determined to be dilapidated (cost more than 50 percent of the property tax value to repair), the City Council can adopt a demolition ordinance condemning the property and directing that it be demolished. The cost of this process is the

responsibility of the property owner, as it is very structured to ensure that the City is addressing the rights of all involved. This fiscal year, the City of Concord has demolished 22 properties for a cost of \$27,660. □





# Brickley and White Join Rocky River Golf Club Staff



Ryan Brickley

The Embassy Suites Golf Resort & Spa and its Rocky River Golf Club have named Ryan Brickley as director of golf and Joel White as golf course superintendent.

Brickley comes to the resort from Olde Sycamore Golf Plantation, where he was head golf professional for two years. White was the resort's assistant superintendent for four years before serving as interim superintendent this past winter.

"Ryan and Joel are going to provide the lift that will deliver a great golfing experience for our customers," said resort general manager, Terry Crawford. "Ryan and Joel both bring the professionalism and experience that

will support our goal to continue to make Rocky River Golf Club the premier public course in our area."

Brickley is an Ohio native with several years of experience in the Charlotte golf market. Before joining Olde Sycamore, he was an assistant pro at Ballantyne Country Club for two years. Prior to that, he spent three years as director of instruction at NorthStone Country Club and two years as director of instruction at the Michael Jordan Golf Center.

Brickley, who started his new role on March 15, said this could be a good year for the course given the fact that so many people stay on property at the Embassy Suites.

White, who was elevated to

superintendent on Feb. 1, grew up nearby in Cabarrus County and holds a degree in turf management from CPCC. He worked on the maintenance crew at Cabarrus Country Club from 1999 to 2002, and was an assistant superintendent at Myers Park Country Club from 2002 to 2005 before accepting the same job at Rocky River.

"My first goal is to get the greens in satisfactory condition to perform the way they're meant to," White said, "then work on details around the edges of the course. There is tremendous potential here."

For information on Rocky River Golf Club at the Embassy Suites Golf Resort & Spa, call (704) 455-1200 or visit [www.rockyrivergolf.com](http://www.rockyrivergolf.com). □

## Yard Waste: What You Need to Know About Disposal!

Summertime equals mowing the grass, trimming trees and bushes, and working in your flower or vegetable garden. Each will generate some type of vegetative waste that you will want to dispose of. One of the questions we receive on a frequent basis is, "How do I properly dispose of yard waste?"

The answer is simple. Bag it! Yard waste includes grass clippings, leaves, trees and shrubbery trimmings — all of which must be placed in **clear plastic or biodegradable paper bags**.

Limbs must be less than 12 inches in diameter, no longer than six feet and stacked neatly at the curb so as not to obstruct the sidewalk or the

roadway. No yard waste should ever be placed in your roll-out cart. Place all yard waste six feet away from parked vehicles, utility poles and other structures, and away from low overhead lines or low-hanging tree limbs. This helps the truck's knuckle boom to safely operate when picking up limbs. □

by Mayor Scott Padgett

## Common Sense About Incentives/Industrial Grants

With current unemployment rates and the need for jobs, I would like to comment on one aspect of economic development — incentives. Using incentives to create jobs is controversial and often misunderstood.

Most every elected official I know will say they would prefer not to have to deal with incentives, and I am one of them. But the reality is that we are competing for jobs and

Concord. The table below shows the investments made by the business in their facilities, their annual payrolls and the number of jobs created. It is clear that incentives are bringing millions of dollars and thousands of jobs into our local economy.

There is at least one elected official in a neighboring governing body who believes that incentives have no impact on bringing jobs to

federal Economic Development Administration grant for infrastructure, hundreds of jobs and income for our local economy would not be here. We have been paid back our incentive investment many times over. I believe it is a case where it is accurate to say, “but for the incentive, this would not have been built.” The facility has been open and successful for three years now, but business recruitment efforts remain as crucial as ever.

Incentives are an investment, a tool to create jobs and the investment helps keep taxes low for everyone. I would point out that our tax rate of 42 cents per \$100 of valuation is much lower than some of our neighboring cities who have not been as fortunate in recruiting efforts. A few simple facts will help you understand why incentives are a low-risk tool when carefully applied:

- An incentive is typically a partial rebate of the business’ taxes for a short period of time.
- This tax revenue did not exist before the business came.
- The City rebates a set percentage of paid taxes and keeps the rest.
- **The rebate is given if and only if 1) taxes are paid in full and; 2) the recipient meets performance**

<b>Recent Grants Awarded</b>			
<b>Company</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>Annual Payroll</b>	<b>Jobs</b>
Connexions	\$4,950,000	\$18,000,000	400
PreGel	\$15,000,000	\$2,500,000	20
Great Wolf	\$97,000,000	\$9,230,000	400
MRN	\$1,800,000	\$2,100,000	35
Windshear	\$40,000,000	\$930,000	10
Celgard	\$57,400,000	\$12,980,000	223
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$216,150,000</b>	<b>\$45,740,000</b>	<b>1088</b>

economic development with other cities and states. With unemployment at a record high, the stakes are greater than ever. Our neighboring states are willing to provide extreme amounts of money and land to lure jobs. Is this a fair or good system? I would emphatically answer no. On the other hand, it is today’s reality.

Let’s look at a few recent examples of incentive grants in

Concord and Cabarrus County, and uses the Embassy Suites Hotel and Concord Convention Center as an example. He states that the project was built with no incentives. That is simply untrue. The fact is that it was built after the City donated the land on which the hotel is constructed and leased the parcel for the Convention Center and parking. Had the City not made this small investment, combined with a



requirements. Otherwise, the business would get no rebate.

- There is always a net gain in taxes, but, most importantly, jobs.

It is fair to ask — how do these incentives affect the community? Jobs are added to the economy, and the benefit spreads to other businesses in the community who provide goods and services to those employees. For example, an unemployed person gets a job with Celgard and is able to buy a house after living with family. The sale of that home alone benefits the sellers, the real estate agent, the furniture store, the appliance store and so on... not to mention all the other businesses the family is able to support with their income. After the rebate period is over, the community still has the jobs along with the full impact of the tax revenues to support public services. It is a win-win for everyone.

As you can see from the table, Concord has used incentives to increase investment, but most importantly, to provide much-needed jobs. In the case of Celgard, it was a team effort from Congressman Kissell, Senators Burr and Hagan, the N.C. Department of Commerce, Cabarrus County Economic Development Commission, Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners and Concord City Council.

To compete for jobs we will need to continue to be aggressive. We owe this to our citizens. □



## Recognition

# City of Concord Receives National Recognition for Reliable Electric Operations

For the second time, the City of Concord is one of 94 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities to earn Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3®) recognition from the American Public Power Association for providing consumers with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service. The designation will remain for two years.

Paul Allen, vice president, engineering at Nashville, Tenn., Electric Service and chair of APPA's RP3® Review Panel, presented the designees on March 29 during the association's annual Engineering & Operations Technical Conference held in Omaha, Nebraska.

"The RP3® designation represents a high level of service to communities all over the country," said Allen. "These 94 utilities stand out as models of safe and reliable utility operations."

The RP3® recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement. Criteria within each category are based on sound business practices and represent a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity.

"We're honored to receive our RP3® designation," said Brian Hiatt, city manager. "Our utility staff puts in a lot of hard work to provide reliable and safe service to our community. RP3® is a much-appreciated recognition of this hard work."

This is the fifth year that RP3® recognition has been offered. APPA is the national organization representing more than 2,000 not-for-profits, community- and state-owned electric utilities. It is located in Washington, D.C. □

## HAVE A QUESTION?

Visit the City of Concord's Web site at  
[www.ci.concord.nc.us](http://www.ci.concord.nc.us).



## Hot Weather Precautions

# The Heat is On: Tips for Heat Exhaustion, Heatstroke and Hydration

It is that time of year when Mother Nature turns the heat up. It is important for those who work or play outside to recognize the distress signs of heat exhaustion and heatstroke, and to stay sufficiently hydrated.

The Mayo Clinic Web site defines heat exhaustion as “one of the heat-related syndromes, which ranges in severity from mild heat cramps to potentially life-threatening heatstroke.”

Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion often begin suddenly, sometimes after excessive exercise, heavy perspiration, and inadequate fluid or salt intake. Signs and symptoms resemble those of shock and may include:

- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Nausea
- Heavy sweating
- Rapid, weak heartbeat
- Low blood pressure
- Cool, moist, pale skin
- Low-grade fever
- Heat cramps
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Dark-colored urine

### If you suspect heat exhaustion:

- Get the person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned

location.

- Lay the person down and elevate the legs and feet slightly.
- Loosen or remove the person’s clothing.
- Have the person drink cool water or another nonalcoholic beverage without caffeine.
- Cool the person by spraying or sponging him or her with cool water and fanning.
- Monitor the person carefully. Heat exhaustion can quickly become heatstroke.

If you identify someone with a fever greater than 102°F (38.9°C), or if fainting, confusion or seizures occur, call 911 or emergency medical help.

So, how is a heatstroke different from heat exhaustion? Again, the Mayo Clinic defines a heatstroke as “the most severe of the heat-related problems, often resulting from exercise or heavy work in hot environments combined with inadequate fluid intake.”

Young children, older adults, people who are obese and people born with an impaired ability to sweat are at high risk of heatstroke. Other risk factors include dehydration, alcohol use, cardiovascular disease and certain medications.



What makes heatstroke severe and potentially life-threatening is that the body’s normal mechanisms for dealing with heat stress — such as sweating and temperature control — are inadequate. The main sign of heatstroke is a markedly elevated body temperature — generally greater than 104°F (40°C) — with changes in mental status ranging from personality changes to confusion and coma. Skin may be hot and dry, although if heatstroke is caused by exertion, the skin may be moist.

Other signs and symptoms may include:

- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid and shallow breathing
- Elevated or lowered blood pressure
- Cessation of sweating
- Irritability, confusion or unconsciousness
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Headache
- Nausea
- Fainting, which may be the first sign in older adults.

### If you suspect heatstroke:

- Move the person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned space.
- Call 911 or emergency medical help.

- Cool the person by covering him or her with damp sheets or by spraying with cool water. Direct air onto the person with a fan or newspaper.

- Have the person drink cool water or another nonalcoholic beverage without caffeine, if he or she is able.

Remember to keep drinking

water or a sports drink such as Gatorade if you plan on high-intensity exercise or prolonged outdoor exercise in warm weather. A fast fact is that the human body is made up of 50 to 75 percent water. This equates to 10 to 12 gallons of water. Even a mild case of dehydration has an impact on

your body, making you feel tired and less energetic. Always drink before you become thirsty. Once you recognize you are thirsty, you are probably already dehydrated.

Be safe outside this summer and keep a water bottle handy. □



## Online Bill Payment



You can access your utility bill account information as well as pay your utility and tax bills by Internet and telephone. Visit our Web site at [www.ci.concord.nc.us](http://www.ci.concord.nc.us) and click on the Pay Your Utility Bill link. If you would like to pay your bill by phone, call our Customer Care Center at 704-920-5555. Both systems are quick and easy to use as long as you have a credit card. Both systems are also secure and confidential. □

## City of Concord Important Phone Numbers

Fire, Police, Medical Emergencies .....911

### ONE NUMBER DOES IT ALL

For service requests and inquiries about any of the following listed below, call the Customer Call Center at 704-920-5555.

New Services

Electric Outages/Services

Water/Sewer Emergencies

Dead Animal Pick-up

Drinking Water Inquiries

Garbage/Bulk Pick-up/Recycling

Utility Bills

Street/Traffic Light Issues

Right-of-Way Issues

Storm Water/Storm Drain/Flooding Problems

Yard Waste/Leaf Collection

Building Material Disposal

Bulk Metal Collection

Old Tire Collection

Vacant Lot Cleaning/Mowing

The primary phone numbers for the various City departments are:

Accounts Payable .....704-920-5217

Accounts Receivable .....704-920-5231

Buildings & Grounds .....704-920-5380

Business & Neighborhood Services .....704-920-5120

City Clerk .....704-920-5205

City Manager .....704-920-5215

Communications .....704-920-5580

Concord Regional Airport .....704-920-5900

Community Development .....704-920-5132

Development Services.....704-920-5152

Electric Services .....704-920-5320

Engineering .....704-920-5425

Finance .....704-920-5220

Fire Chief .....704-920-5516

Fleet Services.....704-920-5430

GIS .....704-920-5153

Housing .....704-788-1139

Human Resources .....704-920-5100

Meter Reading .....704-920-5219

Parks & Recreation .....704-920-5600

Police (non-emergency) .....704-920-5000

Public Relations .....704-920-5204

Purchasing.....704-920-5440

RIDER.....704-920-7433

Rocky River Golf Club .....704-455-1200

Sewer Construction & Maintenance .....704-920-5351

Solid Waste .....704-920-5361

Stormwater .....704-920-5360

Streets .....704-920-5362

Tax Collector .....704-920-5216

TDD.....1-800-735-8262

Water Resources .....704-920-5341

Main Switchboard Menu .....704-920-5200

[www.ci.concord.nc.us](http://www.ci.concord.nc.us)





## Customer Service

# Manage Your Utility Account Online!

eCare is the City's new customer account information system that allows customers to:

- View billing and usage history
- View service order history
- Access information for multiple accounts
- Pay by Credit Card
- Pay by Electronic Check

**Please note:** Online payments are subject to a \$2.50 convenience fee paid to COLLECTOR Solutions. There is a \$2.50 convenience fee per \$300 of bill payment. To avoid paying this fee, we encourage you to use one of our **No-Fee Payment Options**.

In order to access your account information through eCare, you must first sign up to obtain your PIN. Please have a copy of your bill handy when signing up. You will need to enter a meter number listed on your bill to verify that you are signing up for the right account. You will also need to enter the name exactly as it appears on your bill (ALL CAPS, etc...). Entering your correct email address is VERY important because your PIN number will be emailed to you. Please double check your email address before clicking submit when you first sign up.

If you fail to receive the password email, make sure that any spam filtering software/service you may

be using is not blocking emails from the ci.concord.nc.us domain. To sign up, visit [www.ci.concord.nc.us/ecare](http://www.ci.concord.nc.us/ecare) and click the link that says "Sign up now to access your account online!"

After you sign up and obtain your PIN, you can log in using the account number on your bill and your PIN number. When you first sign up for eCare, you should receive an email that contains your PIN. The PIN is randomly generated and contains both numbers and alphabetical characters. If you have trouble logging in, it may be because some of the letters in your PIN are actually numbers. A lower case L sometimes looks like the numeral 1. Try copying and pasting the PIN into the textbox instead of typing it in. Once you have successfully logged in for the first time, you can easily change your PIN to something you can remember.

### How to match your account number to the eCare format:

Your account number has two parts. The digits before the dash are your account number. Enter this in the first box. The two digits after the dash go in the second box. The beginning zeros are optional. For example:

Your account number as it appears on bill: **00123456-00**.

## No-Fee Payment Options

The following options do NOT require a processing fee.

- **Automatic Bank Draft:** By far the easiest option. Ensures your payment is on time each month.
- **Mail Us a Check:** The City has implemented a lock box payment processing program. To assist us in providing you the most efficient processing of your utility payment, please use the return envelope and billing stub provided to you each month.

*Payment processing address:*

City of Concord  
P.O. Box 580469  
Charlotte, NC 28258-0469

- **Pay in Person by Check or Cash:** Inside the Municipal Building at 26 Union Street South or at the Market Street drive-thru located behind the Municipal Building.

**123456** would go in the first box. **00** would go in the second box.

The third box is for your '**Personal Identification Number**' (also called **PIN**). This is your eCare password. If you have not signed up for eCare yet, follow the instructions at the beginning of this article to obtain your PIN.

*You may have already been paying your utility bill online, and logging in with your account number and a password of the last four digits of your Social Security Number. **This password will NOT work with eCare. You must sign up for eCare and obtain your eCare password.***

If you encounter any problems, please call us at 704-920-5555. □



by Gary Fitz, Wastewater Department

# Concord Sewer Easement Notification Program Phase I Has Been Completed

The City of Concord maintains approximately 532 miles of gravity sewer lines. If these lines were placed end to end, they would extend from the Cabarrus County Courthouse to the gates of Disneyworld. These lines cross many miles of private properties along the sewer main alignment. Some property owners are unaware of these easements. As a result, many easements are built upon, landscaped and fenced, which inhibit the City's ability to properly access these sewer lines.

Concord has developed a three-part program to systematically locate sewer lines and easement documents. Once the sewer lines and documents are located, property owners are notified of their existence. Properties with easements are flagged in the City's utility billing system. If the flagged parcel changes ownership, a tickler alerts the Wastewater System Compliance Officer and a notification letter is sent to the new customer along with the corresponding deed book and map book reference.

You may wish to call the Department for assistance when you consider incorporating a fence,

gates, sheds, swimming pools, swing sets, irrigation wells, detached garages, trees and landscape plantings. These items coupled with a sewer line have the potential for a future problem.

**Here are some tips on how to identify whether or not you have an easement on your property, and what the regulations are if you do.**

First, to find out if you have an easement, the first place to look is in the deed book with the Register of Deeds for Cabarrus County. You are also welcome to call the **Wastewater Department for assistance at 704-920-5352.**

**"What can I do if my fence crosses a sanitary sewer easement?"**

We urge anyone who wants to build a fence on their property to contact us. We will locate the easement and discuss your particular situation with you. However, if the fence is already built, the addition of a gate (at least 10 feet in width) will provide the access needed by service crews.

**"What is the standard width for easements?"**

There is no standard width for easements, but generally it is anywhere from 20 to 30 feet. Again, you can find out information

about your particular easement by calling the Wastewater Department or visiting their Web site.

**"What if the item in my backyard on or near the easement can be moved?"**

Items that can be moved with "little exertion," such as trampolines, sand boxes, inflatable swimming pools, yard ornaments or lawn furniture are generally not a problem if they can be moved easily in case of an emergency.

**"What about planting trees or landscaping along the easement?"**

The short answer to this is "No." This is simply because crews need to have unrestricted access to the site and a tree would need to be removed or relocated if it were in the way.

The manhole needs to remain accessible at all times. You cannot cover the manhole with sod, soil or plant shrubs around it in any way. Disguising the manhole might make it harder for the crews to find. However, a movable object, such as a birdbath, would be acceptable.

Taking care of our easements and right-of-ways affects all of us. That is why the City asks for your help in keeping access to our sewer lines unrestricted. □



## Concord Cemeteries: A Brief History, Part I

Many of Concord's cemeteries have extremely interesting histories. Currently, the City of Concord owns and maintains four cemeteries — Oakwood, Rutherford, Union Cemetery (West Concord) and McClure-Hunter-Meck Cemetery. However, there are a number of private cemeteries located in Concord, including those developed and maintained by families and churches.

This is the first of a two-part series on the cemeteries located in the city of Concord to remind everyone of their rich history and folklore.

Cemeteries tie us to our loved ones and our history as a physical reminder of the past. This first part is a short historical review of some of the cemeteries, but it likely is missing a lot of historical facts and fantastic stories. If you have any information to include in the second part of this series, please submit it to the address listed at the conclusion of this article.

The oldest documentation of a death and burial in the Lore Library Room of the Cabarrus County Library is in the oldest cemetery — the McClure Cemetery.

The story goes that sometime before 1750, Mrs. Clarke was scalped by Native Americans —

probably Cherokees — resisting the white settlers. She was wrapped in a blanket and buried by the Rocky River. Other pioneers were buried in this area as well. Many buried there were farmers, fighters of the Revolutionary War, children, families and church members. As the site filled, a local doctor started a family cemetery about 100 yards from this location. Dr. Charles Harris built his graveyard near his home and the Poplar Tent Presbyterian Church.

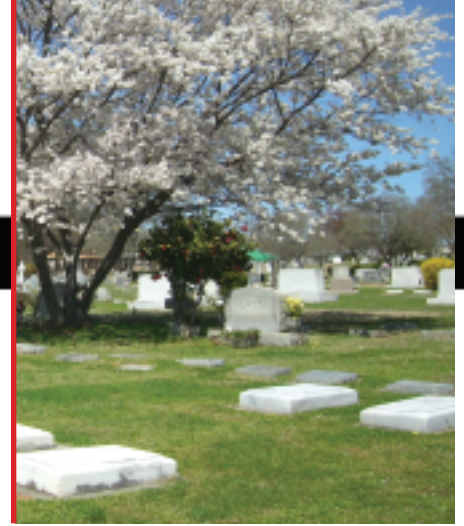
Years later, the location of the Poplar Tent Presbyterian Church changed. Twentieth-century growth in the area and proposed new development challenged the existence of the cemeteries. Professional archaeologists and technicians cataloged the remains, which were moved to their current resting place over eight weeks at a cost of \$100,000. Approximately 179 graves were located at the site, which amazed most because only 50 gravesites were expected. The Harris Family remains were interred at the Poplar Tent Church and the other remains are located in a gravesite owned by the City of Concord along Weddington Road near the Rocky River.

Oakwood Cemetery has gravesites dating back to the

1700s. Many members of the textile families are buried here. J.W. Cannon, A.L. Brown, and W.R. Odell families are interred in Oakwood. In 1921, an act to amend the City of Concord charter provided for a Cemetery Commission for Oakwood Cemetery upkeep. The proceeds from the sale of cemetery plots were designated by this charter for the treasurer to pay for the upkeep. A \$1,000 bond was issued initially to raise capital for the maintenance otherwise known as the "Fund for Perpetual Upkeep of Oakwood Cemetery." To date, the City of Concord maintains and cares for the Oakwood Cemetery.

Today, upkeep of Oakwood Cemetery costs \$530,146 annually, which includes the operational and personnel costs for eight full-time employees to maintain and keep the grounds beautiful.

On Cabarrus Avenue is the 13-acre Zion Hill Cemetery. Trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal church — Ephraim Means, Warren C. Coleman, Richard McKree and Col. John Young — purchased the land on June 7, 1876 for \$595 for a "colored cemetery near the county home." Coleman, the founder of the first black-owned-and-operated mill in the area; Dr.





Logan, principal of the elementary school; the first black veterans of both World War I and World War II; Harold Goodman and Charlie Rutherford; two North Carolina Generals; teachers; carpenters; farmers; mechanics; and soldiers are buried here. Zion Hill cemetery is rich in African American history.

Memorial Gardens, a private cemetery located on Spring Street, is a historical treasure. Memorial Gardens was originally purchased in 1804 by First Presbyterian Church for construction of its first sanctuary. The original building, built in 1810, on the highest point of the property, was a 12-sided log structure. The second church building, erected of brick on the same site, was begun in 1835 and completed in 1837. A third building was erected in 1874 and located about a block away on West Depot Street. The cemetery is located on the original site of the church.

Many Revolutionary and Confederate officers and soldiers — from generals to infantrymen — were laid to rest here. The oldest marked grave is that of Captain Joseph Shin, a Revolutionary War soldier buried in 1804. The Pfifer family, which originally dedicated this land to the church, is interred in the cemetery.

Some of the interesting tombstones are of James McDonald, which states only that he was from Ireland, the 22-year-old circus rider from Scotland, and the cairn of a Native American who was buried here as a Christian.

Another private cemetery that was relocated was the Smith family



cemetery, located on what is now land used for the Charlotte Motor Speedway. This cemetery was near where the water tower is now located. The same archaeologist and relocation professionals that cataloged and moved the McClure site for the King's Grant developer moved the Smith family cemetery.

Again, this is just a small sampling of the history of the cemeteries in the city of Concord. For more information, spend some time at the Concord Branch of the Cabarrus Library on the second floor in the Lore History Room. Research was conducted by the Concord staff with the help of library staff member, Patricia Curl, in the Lore History Room.

You are encouraged to submit additional information on the cemeteries in the city limits to David Ratchford, Buildings and Grounds Director, P.O. Box 308, Concord, NC 28026, or email [ratchfod@ci.concord.nc.us](mailto:ratchfod@ci.concord.nc.us). This information will be considered for the second historical segment in the *City Circular*. ▢

## Oakwood Columbarium

Most people ask, "What is a columbarium?"

A columbarium is a respectful place for a loved one's cremated remains. The City of Concord built a columbarium in the Oakwood Cemetery to meet the needs of families wishing for a peaceful place for their family member's final resting place. This cemetery is located at 471 Church Street and has a long history.

### **Q. How can I purchase a cemetery lot?**

A. You can contact the Tax Collection Department at (704) 920-5216.

### **Q. How can I find information on my family's cemetery lot?**

A. Contact Charles Carithers at Oakwood Cemetery, (704) 786-8212.

### **Q. How much is a niche in the Columbarium?**

A. A resident Columbarium niche is \$1,500; a non-resident niche is \$1,800; and an engraved niche cover costs \$300.



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## Ordinances

# Yard Sale Signs: What You Should Know

Summer is a time for popsicles, swimming, lazy days and yard sales. There are some important issues to remember when posting those yard sale signs around your neighborhood.

The City of Concord has an ordinance regulating yard, garage, attic, porch, room, backyard, patio, flea market and rummage sales. There can be no more than three sales per year and no single sale can be displayed longer than two consecutive days or more than 16 hours in a single week. Yard sales can only occur during the daylight

hours and only on the property of the person holding the sale.

Yard sale signs should not be attached to utility poles, telephone poles, trees, bridges and overpasses, rocks, other signs, benches and refuse containers in the city limits.

"Any signs placed in the right-of-way or on any utility pole will be removed. Yard sale signs will be removed. This enables us to maintain beautiful roadways in the city of Concord," Mitchell Furr, code enforcement officer, said.

- Signs must be no more than six



square feet.

- They may not be illuminated.
- They may remain in place for 72 hours.
- They may be placed in a yard or alongside an intersecting street provided they are not located in a sight triangle or street right-of-way.
- They must not be placed on any tree, street sign or utility pole.
- All signs must be self-standing.

City employees will remove signs that do not meet these requirements. □